



NEW YORK POLYPHONY SING THEE NOWELL

1	VENI EMMANUEL – Andrew Smith (b. 1970)	3'14
2	ADAM LAY YBOUNDEN – Geoffrey Williams (b. 1976)	1'32
3	GABRIEL ARCHANGELUS – Philippe Verdelot (fl. 1485–1530)	4'23
4	GABRIEL'S MESSAGE – Trad., arr. Alexander Craig (b. 1971)	2'12
5	THERE IS NO ROSE – Trinity Roll MS (15th century)	2'17
6	THERE IS NO ROSE ('HEREFORD') – S. S. Wesley, arr. G. Williams	2'18
7	THERE IS NO ROSE – John Scott (b. 1956)	3'13
8	NESCIENS MATER – Byttering (d. 1420)	1'34
9	O PIA VIRGO – Michael McGlynn (b. 1964)	3'14
10	NOWELL: OUT OF YOUR SLEEP – Selden MS (15th century)	3'00
11	NOWELL: ARISE AND WAKE – Andrew Smith	3'29
	FIVE CAROLS – Richard Rodney Bennett (1936–2012)	9'54
12	There is no Rose	2'45
13	Out of your Sleep	1'47
14	That Younge Child	1'21
15	Sweet was the Song	2'29
16	Susanni	1'25

17	SLEEP NOW – Alexander Craig	1'36
18	O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM – Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611)	3'36
19	QUEM PASTORES LAUDAVERE – Trad., arr. Susan LaBarr (b. 1982)	2'34
20	QUID PETIS, O FILI – Richard Pygott (1485–1549)	5'48
21	UN FLAMBEAU, JEANETTE, ISABELLE – Trad., arr. Alexander Craig	2'08
22	BETHLEHEM DOWN – Peter Warlock (1894–1930)	3'54
23	MAGI VENIUNT AB ORIENTE – Jacob Clemens ‘non Papa’ (1500–56)	6'39
24	O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM – L. H. Redner, arr. Alexander Craig	2'36

TT: 71'17

NEW YORK POLYPHONY

GEOFFREY WILLIAMS *countertenor*

STEVEN CALDICOTT WILSON *tenor*

CHRISTOPHER DYLAN HERBERT *baritone*

CRAIG PHILLIPS *bass*

with SARAH BRAILEY *and* ELIZABETH BABER WEAVER *sopranos* [tracks 12–16, 22]

From October to Christmas day, we are typically subjected to a barrage of Christmas carols. And it seems to start earlier and earlier every year, driven by an ever-expanding shopping season. But when much of the music on this recording was written, the Christmas season started and ended according to the church calendar, not the fiscal calendar.

The chief themes of the Christmas season – the Annunciation, Advent, Nativity, and Epiphany – are reflected here in music spanning the Middle Ages to the present day. Advent is a time when Christians prepare for the coming of Christ. The beautiful chant melody of the most famous of Advent hymns, *Veni Emmanuel*, has its roots in the ninth century. Andrew Smith’s contemporary version, written for New York Polyphony, spices the timeless melody with daring harmonies and innovative part writing.

Stories and prophecies from the Old Testament are also key elements of the Advent season, portraying the journey from darkness (humans in their pre-redeemed state) to light (with Christ’s coming). *Adam lay ybounden* refers to Adam’s sin in the Garden of Eden, and its redemption through Christ. New York Polyphony’s countertenor, Geoffrey Williams, has composed a sensitive and sonorous setting of the medieval text.

Philippe Verdelot’s *Gabriel Archangelus* showcases the brilliant richness and ornate splendour with which the Flemish composers of the Renaissance set text. This text is from the Gospel of Luke, in which the angel Gabriel appears to the aged priest Zechariah to announce the conception of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. Gabriel’s other annunciation – to the Virgin Mary – is one of the most moving moments in the Christmas story, and the arrangement of the old Basque carol *Gabriel’s Message* by Alexander Craig (the *nom de plume* of New York Polyphony’s bass, Craig Phillips) conveys all the mystery and wonder of that moment.

During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, adoration of the Virgin Mary found expression in art and literature – Chaucer’s Prioress sings a passionate hymn to the Virgin in the *Canterbury Tales*. *There is no Rose* is from the Trinity Carol Roll (from Trinity College at Cambridge), a collection of thirteen anonymous carols copied during the first half of the 15th century. The carol’s timeless imagery, ‘For in this Rose [Mary] contained was heaven and earth in little space’, has also inspired new settings. The version John Scott wrote for New York Polyphony is distinctively contemporary and highly melodic, while Geoffrey Williams’s version makes reference to Samuel Sebastian Wesley’s hymn tune ‘Hereford’ (1872).

Nesciens mater is found in the Old Hall Manuscript, a 15th-century English collection of sacred music. Attributed to the composer Byttering, the motet weaves threads of counterpoint above a chant melody. Michael McGlynn’s *O pia virgo mater*, composed for New York Polyphony, is a simple prayer to the Virgin coloured with tonalities that suggest a much older music; it moves from the dramatic to the quietly tender.

There’s nothing quiet about *Nowell: Out of your sleep*, a rousing exhortation to ‘arise and wake for God mankind hath now ytake [taken]’. Found in the Selden Manuscript, another English collection of 15th-century carols, its rugged rhythms and stirring refrain make it one of the most popular of old carols. Andrew Smith’s *Nowell: Arise and wake*, premiered by New York Polyphony in 2013, is less vigorous but hardly less moving – an exciting new take on an old carol.

Richard Rodney Bennett was a master of many genres, including jazz, film, symphonic and choral music. Bennett’s *There is no Rose*, *Out of your Sleep* and *Susanni* fascinate and delight with jaunty rhythmic freedom, while the honeyed melodiousness of *Sweet was the Song* and *That Younge Child* ideally capture the mood of their texts.

Of course, the centrepiece of the Christmas season is the Nativity. A sleeping

infant with his mother singing a gentle lullaby, barnyard animals nearby in a humble stable, and mesmerized shepherds coming to witness the scene are part of a tableau that has inspired painters, poets and composers for centuries. Alexander Craig's setting of the James Joyce poem *Sleep Now* uses dulcet, close harmonies to conjure images of the Virgin and child. The Spanish Renaissance master Tomás Luis de Victoria's motet *O magnum mysterium* ponders the great mystery 'that animals should see the newborn Lord lying in a manger'. Victoria communicates a sense of wonder and, ultimately, exaltation with subtle four-part writing.

The shepherd's amazement and simple devotion is recounted in many carols. With roots in a 14th-century German folk hymn, *Quem pastores laudavere* was set by Michael Praetorius in the 17th century and will also be familiar to some as the hymn 'Jesus, good above all other'. Susan LaBarr's delightful, straightforward arrangement retains the gorgeous tune. Alexander Craig also offers an intimate and inspired arrangement of a carol from an older tradition: *Un flambeau, Jeanette, Isabelle* was originally a Provençal *noël*, and was later arranged by Marc-Antoine Charpentier.

As joyous as the Christmas season is, even here the darker events of Christ's life are foreshadowed. Richard Pygott, one of Henry VIII's court composers, hints at future pain in his piercingly beautiful lullaby *Quid petis o fili?*, as the Virgin speaks to the infant Christ in sombre tones. It also steers our thoughts to Herod's Slaughter of the Innocents (the first-born of Bethlehem killed after the birth of Christ) and the laments of weeping mothers. Peter Warlock's haunting *Bethlehem Down* is a mainstay of the carol literature, a brilliant marriage of melody and text that celebrates the nativity but also speaks of Christ's death on the cross: 'When he is King they will clothe him in grave-sheets, myrrh for embalming, and wood for a crown.'

Epiphany marks the end of the Christmas season; its key element is the mani-

festation of Christ to the Magi. Jacob Clemens ‘non Papa’ (a sobriquet intended to distinguish him from Pope Clement) wrote *Magi veniunt ab oriente*, one of the most glorious motets of the Flemish school. Clemens tells the tale of the Magi and their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh in dramatic style, with a particularly powerful passage when the wise men see the star of Bethlehem and proclaim ‘This is the sign of a great king!’

But at Christmas, the great king is still just a little baby. Alexander Craig’s arrangement of the timeless carol *O Little Town of Bethlehem* takes us back to the simple manger with sweetly flowing melody and unaffected charm. It’s Christmas past, present and to come.

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Praised for a ‘rich, natural sound that’s larger and more complex than the sum of its parts’ (National Public Radio), **New York Polyphony** is regarded as one of the finest vocal chamber ensembles in the world. The four men ‘sing with intelligence, subtlety and consummate artistry’ (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*), applying a distinctly modern touch to repertoire that ranges from austere medieval melodies to cutting-edge contemporary compositions. The ensemble’s dedication to innovative programming, as well as a focus on rare and rediscovered works, have not only earned New York Polyphony critical acclaim and a devoted following, but also helped to move early music into the classical mainstream.

Since its founding in 2006, New York Polyphony has maintained an active performing schedule. The ensemble has toured extensively, participating in major concert series and festivals around the world.

In late 2013, New York Polyphony released *Times go by Turns* [BIS-2037 SACD]. The album – featuring Mass settings by Thomas Tallis and William Byrd, as well

three new works written for the ensemble by composers Gabriel Jackson, Andrew Smith and the late Richard Rodney Bennett – has met with strong critical acclaim. In addition to being named one of iTunes 10 Best Classical Releases of 2013, *Times go by Turns* also garnered a GRAMMY® nomination in the Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance category.

For further information please visit www.newyorkpolyphony.com

Von Oktober bis Weihnachten werden wir regelmäßig mit Weihnachtsliedern überschwemmt. Und jedes Jahr scheint dieser Zeitraum infolge einer unablässig expandierenden Einkaufssaison früher einzusetzen. Zu der Zeit aber, da die meisten Werke der vorliegenden Einspielung komponiert wurden, begann und endete die Weihnachtszeit im Einklang mit dem Kirchen-, nicht dem Geschäftsjahr.

Die Hauptmotive der Weihnachtszeit – Verkündigung, Advent, Geburt Christi, und Epiphanie – spiegeln sich hier in einer Musik wider, die sich vom Mittelalter bis hin zur Gegenwart erstreckt. Advent ist die Zeit, in der die Christen sich auf die Ankunft Christi vorbereiten. Die wunderschöne Melodie des berühmtesten aller Adventslieder – *Veni, Veni Emmanuel* – hat ihre Wurzeln im 9. Jahrhundert. Andrew Smiths moderne Fassung, die für New York Polyphony entstanden ist, würzt die zeitlose Melodie mit kühnen Harmonien und innovativer Satztechnik.

Geschichten und Prophezeiungen aus dem Alten Testament sind ebenfalls wichtige Elemente der Adventszeit; sie schildern die Reise aus der Dunkelheit (die Menschheit im Zustand der Unerlöstheit) zum Licht (Ankunft des Herrn). *Adam lay ybounden* thematisiert Adams Sündenfall im Garten Eden und seine Erlösung durch Christus. Geoffrey Williams, der Countertenor von New York Polyphony, hat eine sensible und klangvolle Vertonung des mittelalterlichen Textes angefertigt.

Philippe Verdelots *Gabriel Archangelus* ist ein Beispiel für die verschwenderische Brillanz und das prachtvolle Dekor in den Vertonungen der flämischen Renaissance-Komponisten. Der Text ist dem Lukas-Evangelium entnommen: Der Erzengel Gabriel erscheint dem greisen Priester Zacharias, um ihm die Geburt Johannes des Täufers, des Wegbereiters Christi, zu verkünden. Gabriels zweite Verkündigung – an die Jungfrau Maria – ist einer der bewegendsten Momente der Weihnachtsgeschichte; die Bearbeitung des alten baskischen Weihnachtslieds

Gabriels Botschaft von Alexander Craig (Pseudonym von Craig Philipps, dem Bassisten von New York Polyphony) vermittelt das wunderbare Mysterium jenes Augenblicks.

Während des Mittelalters und der Renaissance wurde der Marienverehrung in Kunst und Literatur vielfältig Ausdruck verliehen; in Chaucers *Canterbury Tales* etwa singt die Priorin eine leidenschaftliche Hymne an die Jungfrau. *There is no Rose* entstammt der Trinity Carol Roll (aus dem Trinity College in Cambridge), einer Abschrift aus dem 15. Jahrhundert, die dreizehn anonyme Weihnachtslieder enthält. Die zeitlose Bildersprache des Weihnachtslieds – „For in this Rose [Mary] contained was heaven and earth in little space“ („Denn diese Rose [Maria] barg auf engem Raum Himmel und Erde“) – hat zahlreiche Neuversionen inspiriert. Die Version, die John Scott für New York Polyphony komponiert hat, ist unverkennbar zeitgenössisch und hochmelodisch, während Geoffrey Williams' Fassung auf Samuel Sebastian Wesleys Kirchenlied „Hereford“ (1872) verweist.

Nesciens mater ist dem Old Hall Manuskript entnommen, einer Sammlung mit Kirchenmusik aus dem 15. Jahrhundert. Die dem Komponisten Byttering zugeschriebene Motette flicht kontrapunktische Linien über eine Chormelodie. Michael McGlynns *O pia virgo mater*, für New York Polyphony komponiert, ist ein einfaches Gebet an die Jungfrau in Tonarten, die an eine weit ältere Musik denken lassen; nach dem dramatischen Beginn bewegt es sich hin zu stiller Zartheit.

Um Stille geht es wahrlich nicht im *Nowell: Out of your sleep*, einer unwiderstehlichen Aufforderung, „aufzuwachen, denn Gott ist heute Mensch geworden“. Es entstammt einer weiteren englischen Sammlung von Weihnachtsliedern aus dem 15. Jahrhundert, dem Selden Manuskript; seine markante Rhythmik und der mitreißende Refrain machen es zu einem der beliebtesten unter den alten Weihnachtsliedern. Andrew Smiths *Nowell: Arise and awake*, das im Jahr 2013 von

New York Polyphony uraufgeführt wurde, ist weniger energisch, aber kaum minder bewegend – eine fesselnde Neuinterpretation eines alten Weihnachtslieds.

Richard Rodney Bennett war ein Meister zahlreicher Genres – u. a. Jazz, Film, Symphonik und Chormusik. Bennetts *There is no Rose, Out of your Sleep* und *Susanni* faszinieren und begeistern mit unbeschwerter rhythmischer Freiheit, während der honigsüße Wohlklang von *Sweet was the Song* und *That Younger Child* der Stimmung der Textvorlagen auf ideale Weise entspricht.

Herzstück der Weihnachtszeit ist natürlich die Geburt Christi. Ein schlafendes Kind, dessen Mutter ein sanftes Wiegenlied singt, während nahebei Hoftiere in einem einfachen Stall stehen und Hirten fasziniert Zeugen dieser Szene werden – das sind die Teile eines Tableaus, das Maler, Dichter und Komponisten seit Jahrhunderten inspiriert. Alexander Craig verwendet in seiner Vertonung des Gedichts *Sleep Now* von James Joyce köstliche Klänge in enger Stimmlage („close harmony“), um Bilder von der Jungfrau und dem Kind heraufzubeschwören. Die Motette *O magnum mysterium* des spanischen Renaissance-Meisters Tomás Luis de Victoria sinniert dem großen Mysterium nach, „warum Tiere den neugeborenen Herrn in einer Krippe liegen sehen“. In subtilem vierstimmigem Satz vermittelt Victoria ein Gefühl des Staunens und, schlussendlich, des Frohlockens.

Die Verwunderung der Hirten und ihre schlichte Demut ist in vielen Liedern dargestellt. *Quem pastores laudavere* hat seine Wurzeln in einem deutschen Volkslied aus dem 14. Jahrhundert und wurde im 17. Jahrhundert von Michael Praetorius vertont; manchen wird es als das Kirchenlied „Kommt und lasst uns Christum ehren“ bekannt sein. Susan LaBarrs entzückende, unkomplizierte Fassung behält die großartige Melodie bei. Von Alexander Craig stammt auch eine intime, inspirierte Bearbeitung eines Lieds aus älterer Zeit: *Un Flambeau, Jeanette, Isabelle* war ursprünglich ein provenzalisches Noël und wurde später von Marc-Antoine Charpentier arrangiert.

So fröhlich die Weihnachtszeit ist – selbst hier finden sich Vorahnungen der dunkleren Geschehnisse im Leben Christi. Richard Pygott, einer der Hofkomponisten Heinrichs VIII., deutet auf künftiges Leid in seinem eindringlich schönen Wiegenlied *Quid petis o fili?*, wenn die Jungfrau in düsterem Ton zu dem Jesuskind spricht. Außerdem lenkt es unsere Gedanken auf Herodes' Massaker der Unschuldigen (die Ermordung von Bethlehems Erstgeborenen nach Christi Geburt) und die Klagen der weinenden Mütter. Peter Warlock bewegendes *Bethlehem Down* gehört zum Kanon des Weihnachtsrepertoires, und ist eine brillante Verbindung von Melodie und Text, die die Geburt feiert, aber auch von Christi Tod am Kreuz spricht: „Wenn er König ist, werden sie ihn in Leintuch kleiden, mit Myrrhe salben und mit Holz bekrönen.“

Das EpiphaniASFest markiert das Ende der Weihnachtszeit; sein Schlüsselement ist die Erscheinung Christi vor den Heiligen Drei Königen. Jacobus Clemens „non Papa“ (der Beiname soll ihn von Papst Clemens unterscheiden) schuf mit *Magi veniunt ab oriente* eine der herrlichsten Motetten der flämischen Schule. Clemens erzählt die Geschichte von den Heiligen Drei Königen und ihren Geschenken Gold, Weihrauch und Myrrhe in dramatischem Stil; besonders wirkungsvoll ist der Moment, wenn die Weisen den Stern von Bethlehem erblicken und verkünden: „Das ist das Zeichen eines großen Königs!“

Zu Weihnachten aber ist der große König noch ein kleines Baby. Alexander Craigs Arrangement des zeitlosen Weihnachtslieds *O Little Town of Bethlehem* führt uns mit süß fließender Melodik und ungekünsteltem Charme zurück zu der einfachen Krippe. Dies ist die vergangene, heutige und künftige Weihnacht.

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New York Polyphony gilt als eines der besten vokalen Kammerensembles der Welt. Die vier Männer singen „mit Intelligenz, Subtilität und vollendeter Kunstfertigkeit“ (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*) und kultivieren „dank sehr eigenständiger Stimmen einen unverkennbaren Ensembleklang“ (*Klassik.com*). Sie verleihen einem Repertoire, das von strengen mittelalterlichen Melodien bis zu allerneuesten Werken reicht, ein entschieden modernes Flair. Sein Faible für innovative Programme sowie rare und wiederentdeckte Werke hat New York Polyphony nicht nur ein begeistertes Medienecho und eine treue Anhängerschaft verschafft, sondern auch dazu beigetragen, Alte Musik auf die Hauptgleise der „Klassik“ zu setzen.

Seit seiner Gründung im Jahr 2006 absolviert New York Polyphony ein reges Konzertprogramm mit zahlreichen Tourneen, in deren Rahmen das Ensemble in bedeutenden Konzertreihen sowie bei wichtigen Festivals in der ganzen Welt aufgetreten ist.

Ende 2013 veröffentlichte New York Polyphony *Times go by Turns* [BIS-2037 SACD]. Das Album, das Messvertonungen von Thomas Tallis und William Byrd sowie drei neue, für das Ensemble komponierte Werke von Gabriel Jackson, Andrew Smith und Richard Rodney Bennett enthält, wurde von der Kritik begeistert aufgenommen. Von iTunes wurde es als eine der 10 besten klassischen Veröffentlichungen 2013 gewürdigt, darüber hinaus wurde es in der Kategorie Beste Kammermusik/Kammerensemble-Einspielung für einen GRAMMY® nominiert.

Weitere Informationen finden Sie auf www.newyorkpolyphony.com

Du mois d'octobre au jour de Noël, on nous soumet annuellement à un barage de chants de Noël qui semble commencer toujours plus tôt à chaque année à cause d'une saison de magasinage en expansion continue. Mais du temps de la composition de la majorité de la musique entendue ici, la saison de Noël commençait et se terminait selon le calendrier religieux et non le calendrier fiscal.

Les thèmes principaux de la période de Noël – l'Annonciation, l'Avent, la Nativité et l'Épiphanie – sont représentés ici dans de la musique du Moyen Âge à nos jours. Les chrétiens se préparent à l'arrivée du Christ pendant l'Avent. La ravissante mélodie de la plus connue des hymnes de l'Avent, *Veni Emmanuel*, date du 9^e siècle. La version contemporaine d'Andrew Smith, écrite pour New York Polyphony, relève la mélodie intemporelle d'harmonies audacieuses et d'écriture nouvelle pour les voix.

Des récits et prophéties de l'Ancien Testament sont aussi des éléments clés de l'Avent, décrivant le passage de l'obscurité (les humains dans leur condition avant la Rédemption) à la lumière (avec l'arrivée du Christ). *Adam lay ybouden* traite du péché d'Adam dans le jardin d'Eden et de sa rédemption par le Christ. Geoffrey Williams, haute-contre de New York Polyphony, a composé un arrangement sensible et sonore du texte médiéval.

Gabriel Archangelus de Philippe Verdelot expose la brillante richesse et la splendeur ornée avec lesquelles les compositeurs flamands de la Renaissance mettent les textes en musique. Ce texte provient de l'évangile selon saint Luc où l'ange Gabriel apparaît au prêtre âgé Zacharie pour lui annoncer la conception de Jean le Baptiste, le précurseur du Christ. L'autre annonce de Gabriel – à la Vierge Marie – est l'un des moments les plus touchants du récit de Noël et l'arrangement du vieux Noël basque *Gabriel's Message* d'Alexander Craig (le nom de plume de Craig Phillips, la basse de New York Polyphony), transmet tout

le mystère et l'émerveillement de ce moment.

Au cours du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance, la dévotion à la Vierge Marie s'exprima dans l'art et la littérature – la prieure de Chaucer chante une hymne passionnée à la Vierge dans les *Canterbury Tales*. *There is no Rose* provient du Trinity Carol Roll (du Trinity College à Cambridge), une collection de treize noëls anonymes copiés au cours de la première moitié du 15^e siècle. Les images intemporelles du noël «For in this Rose [Marie] contained was heaven and earth in little space» ont aussi inspiré de nouveaux arrangements. La version de John Scott pour New York Polyphony est nettement contemporaine et très mélodique tandis que celle de Geoffrey Williams s'associe à l'air de l'hymne «Hereford» (1872) de Samuel Sebastian Wesley.

Nesciens mater a été trouvé dans l'Old Hall Manuscript, une collection anglaise de musique sacrée du 15^e siècle. Attribué au compositeur Byttering, le motet tisse des fils de contrepoint sur une mélodie. Composée pour New York Polyphony, *O pia virgo mater* de Michael McGlynn, une simple prière à la Vierge, est colorée de tonalités qui suggèrent de la musique beaucoup plus ancienne ; elle passe de l'esprit dramatique à la douce tendresse.

Il n'y a rien de calme dans *Nowell : Out of your sleep*, une exhortation vibrante à «arise and wake for God mankind hath now ytake [taken]» [se lever et veiller car Dieu s'est maintenant fait homme]. Trouvé dans le Selden Manuscript, une autre collection anglaise de noëls du 15^e siècle, ses rythmes robustes et son refrain agité en font l'un des vieux noëls des plus populaires. *Nowell : Arise and wake* d'Andrew Smith, créé par New York Polyphony en 2013, est moins énergique mais non moins touchant – une nouvelle prise excitante d'un noël ancien.

Richard Rodney Bennett maîtrisait plusieurs genres dont le jazz, la musique de film, symphonique et chorale. *There is no Rose*, *Out of your Sleep* et *Susanni* de Bennett fascinent et ravissent avec leur joyeuse liberté rythmique tandis que le

caractère mélodique tout sucre de *Sweet was the Song* et de *That Younge Child* capte parfaitement l'atmosphère de leurs textes.

La saison de Noël est évidemment centrée sur la Nativité. Un enfant endormi dont la mère chante une douce berceuse, des animaux de basse-cour à côté dans une humble étable et des bergers fascinés qui arrivent pour voir la scène sont des éléments d'un tableau qui a inspiré peintres, poètes et compositeurs pendant des siècles. L'arrangement d'Alexander Craig du poème *Sleep Now* de James Joyce utilise la voix, des harmonies rapprochées pour évoquer des images de la Vierge et l'Enfant. Le motet *O magnum mysterium* du maître espagnol de la Renaissance Tomás Luis de Victoria médite sur le grand mystère que « des animaux puissent voir le Seigneur nouveau-né couché dans une mangeoire ». Victoria communique un sens d'émerveillement et, finalement, d'exaltation avec une subtile écriture à quatre voix.

L'étonnement des bergers et la simple dévotion se dégagent de plusieurs noëls. A l'origine une hymne populaire allemande du 14^e siècle, *Quem pastores laudavere* fut mise en musique par Michel Praetorius au 17^e siècle et est connue de certains comme l'hymne « Jesus, good above all others ». L'inspiré et ravissant arrangement de Susan LaBarr a gardé la magnifique mélodie. Alexander Craig offre aussi un arrangement intime et inspiré d'un noël d'une tradition ancienne : *Un flambeau, Jeanette, Isabelle* a d'abord été un noël provençal arrangé ensuite par Marc-Antoine Charpentier.

Toute joyeuse que soit la saison des Fêtes, les événements plus sombres de la vie du Christ sont présagés même ici. Richard Pygott, l'un des compositeurs de la cour d'Henri VIII, fait allusion à une douleur future dans sa berceuse d'une beauté poignante *Quid petis o fili* ? où la Vierge parle au Christ enfant dans des tons sombres. Elle dirige aussi notre pensée vers Hérode qui massacre les Innocents (les premiers-nés de Bethléem après la naissance du Christ) et les larmes

des mères éplorées. L'inoubliable *Bethlehem Down* de Peter Warlock est un pilier de la littérature de noëls, un assemblage brillant de mélodie et de texte qui célèbre la Nativité mais parle aussi de la mort du Christ sur la croix : « When he is King they will clothe him in grave-sheets, Myrrh for embalming, and wood for a crown. » [Alors qu'il est roi, on le vêtira d'un suaire, on l'embaumera de myrrhe et on lui mettra une couronne de bois.]

L'Épiphanie marque la fin du temps de Noël ; son thème est la manifestation du Christ aux Mages. Jacob Clemens « non Papa » (un sobriquet voulant de distinguer du pape Clément) a écrit *Magi Veniunt ab oriente*, l'un des motets les plus splendides de l'école flamande. Clemens raconte l'histoire des Mages et de leurs présents – or, encens et myrrhe – dans un style dramatique avec un passage marquant quant les Mages voient l'étoile de Bethléem et déclarent : Voici le signe d'un grand roi ! »

Mais à Noël, le grand roi n'est encore qu'un petit bébé. L'arrangement d'Alexander Craig de l'immortel Noël *O Little Town of Bethlehem* nous ramène à la simple mangeoire avec une mélodie au cours doux et au charme naturel. C'est Noël d'hier, d'aujourd'hui et de demain.

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Salué pour un « son riche et naturel qui est plus large et plus complexe que la somme de ses parties » (National Public Radio), **New York Polyphony** est considéré comme l'un des meilleurs ensembles de chambre vocaux du monde. Le quatuor « fait preuve d'une maîtrise souveraine et expressive de l'art vocal *a cappella* » (*Diapason*), donnant une touche nettement moderne au répertoire passant des austères mélodies médiévales aux compositions contemporaines de pointe. L'engagement de l'ensemble dans des programmes innovateurs ainsi qu'une con-

centration sur des œuvres rares et redécouvertes ont non seulement à New York Polyphony l'approbation des critiques et un public dévoué mais encore ont-ils aussi aidé à mettre la musique ancienne dans le courant classique.

Depuis sa fondation en 2006, New York Polyphony montre un horaire rempli de concerts. L'ensemble fait de nombreuses tournées, participant à d'importants concerts et festivals partout au monde.

A la fin de 2013, New York Polyphony a lancé une nouvelle sortie intitulée *Times go by Turns* [BIS-2037 SACD]. L'album – présentant des messes de Thomas Tallis et William Byrd ainsi que trois œuvres nouvelles de Gabriel Jackson, Andrew Smith et feu Richard Rodney Bennett – fut accueilli avec enthousiasme par les critiques. En plus d'avoir été nommé l'une des meilleures sorties classiques de 2013, *Times go by Turns* a récolté une nomination pour un GRAMMY® en catégorie Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance.

Pour plus de renseignements, veuillez visiter www.newyorkpolyphony.com

[1] *Veni Emmanuel* – Andrew Smith

Veni, O Sapientia,
quae hic disponis omnia,
veni, viam prudentiae
ut doceas et gloriae.
Gaude! Gaude! Emmanuel,
nascetur pro te Israel!

Veni, Clavis Davidica,
regna reclude caelica,
faciter tutum superum,
et claude vias inferum.
Gaude! Gaude!...

Veni, veni O Oriens,
solare nos adveniens,
noctis depelle nebulas,
dirasque mortis tenebras.
Gaude! Gaude!...

Veni, veni Emmanuel
captivum solve Israel,
qui gemit in exilio,
privatus Dei Filio.
Gaude! Gaude!...

O come, Thou Wisdom, from on high,
And order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! O Israel,
To thee shall come Emmanuel!

O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home,
Make safe the way that leads on high,
That we no more have cause to sigh.
Rejoice! Rejoice!...

O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,
And cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadow put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice!...

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice!...

[2] *Adam lay ybounden* – Geoffrey Williams

Adam lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond:
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took,
As clerkès finden
Written in their book.

Nè had the apple taken been,
The apple taken been,

Ne had never our lady
Abeen heavenè queen.

Blessèd be the time
That apple taken was,
Therefore we moun singen,
Deo gratias!

3 *Gabriel Archangelus* – Philippe Verdelot

Gabriel Archangelus apparuit Zacharie dicens:
Nascetur tibi filius, nomen eius Ioannes vocabitur,
et in nativitate eius multi gaudebunt.
Erit enim magnus coram Domino.
Vinum et siceram non bibet,
et in nativitate eius multi gaudebunt. Alleluia.

The Archangel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias, saying:
There will be born to you a son; his name will be called John,
And at his birth many will rejoice,
For he will be great in the sight of the Lord.
Wine and strong drink he will not use,
And at his birth many will rejoice. Alleluia.

4 *Gabriel's Message* – Trad., arr. Alexander Craig

The angel Gabriel from Heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame,
'All hail', said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

'For know, a blessed mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honour thee,
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
'To me be as it pleaseth God', she said,
'My soul shall laud and magnify His holy Name.'
Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the child, was born.
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say
'Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

Text: Basque carol; paraphrased by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834–1924)

5 *There is no Rose – Trinity Roll MS*

6 *There is no Rose – S.S. Wesley, arr. Williams*

7 *There is no Rose – John Scott*

There is no Rose of such virtue as is the Rose that bare Jesu. *Alleluia*

For in this Rose contained was heaven and earth in little space. *Res miranda* [a wonderful thing] *Alleluia*

By that rose we may well see there be one God in Persons three. *Pares forma* [of the same form] *Alleluia*

The angels sungen the shepherds to: *Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gaudeamus* [let us rejoice] *Alleluia*

Then leave we all this worldly mirth, and follow we this joyful birth. *Transeamus* [let us go] *Alleluia*

8 *Nesciens mater – Byttering*

Nesciens mater virgo virum

peperit sine dolore

salvatorem saeculorum.

Ipsum regem angelorum

sola virgo lactabat,

ubera de caelo pleno.

Knowing no man, the Virgin mother

Bore, without pain,

The Saviour of the world.

Him, the king of angels,

Only the Virgin suckled,

Breasts filled by heaven.

9 *O pia virgo – Michael McGlynn*

O pia virgo, mater et alma, Sancta Maria.

Splendida stella per maris undas ne pereamus

fulget amica lux tua ductrix.

O Blessed Virgin and gentle mother, Holy Mary.

Shining star of the sea let your kind light guide us

so that we shall not perish.

10 *Nowell: Out of your sleep – Selden MS*

11 *Nowell: Arise and wake – Andrew Smith*

Out of your sleep arise and wake,

For God mankind hath now ytake.

All of a maid without any make;

Of all women she beareth the bell.

And through a maiden fair and wise,
Now man is made of full great price;
Now angels kneelen to man's service,
And at this time all this befell.

Now man is brighter than the sun;
Now man in heaven on high shall won;
Blessed be God this game is begun
And his mother the Empress of hell.

That ever was thrall now is he free;
That ever was small now great is she;
Now shall God deem both thee and me
Unto his bliss if we do well.

Now man he may to heaven wend;
Now heav'n and earth to him they bend.
He that was foe now is our friend.
This is no nay that I you tell.

Now blessed Brother grant us grace,
At doomèd day to see thy face,
And in thy court to have a place,
That we may there sing thee nowell.

Five Carols – Richard Rodney Bennett

12 *There is no Rose*

See track 5

13 *Out of your Sleep*

See track 10

14 *That Younge Child*

That younge child when it gan weep
With song she lulled him asleep.
That was so sweet a melody
It passed alle minstrelsy.

The nightingale sang also,
His song is hoarse and nought thereto.
Whoso attendeth to her song
And leaveth the first, then doth he wrong.

15 *Sweet was the Song*

Sweet was the song the Virgin sang,
When she to Bethlem Juda came,
And was delivered of a son
That blessed Jesus hath to name.
Lulla, lulla, lullaby.

'Sweet babe', sang she, 'my son,
And eke a saviour born,
Who has vouchsafed from on high
To visit us that were forlorn:
Lalula, lalula, lalulaby.
Sweet babe', sang she,
And rocked him sweetly on her knee.

16 *Susanni*

A little child there is yborn, *Eia, eia, susanni, susanni, susanni.*
And he sprang out of Jesse's thorn, *Alleluya, Alleluya.*
To save all us that were forlorn.

Now Jesus is the childes name, *Eia, eia, susanni, susanni, susanni.*
And Mary mild she is his dame, *Alleluya, alleluya.*
And so our sorrow's turned to game.

It fell upon the high midnight, *Eia, eia, susanni, susanni, susanni.*
The stars they shone both fair and bright. *Alleluya, alleluya.*
The angels sang with all their might.

Three Kings there came with their presents, *Eia, eia, susanni, susanni, susanni*.
Of god and myrrh and frankincense, *Alleluya, alleluya*.
As clerkès sing in their sequence.

Now sit we down upon our knee, *Eia, eia, susanni, susanni, susanni*.
And pray we to the Trinity, *Alleluya, alleluya*.
Our help and succour for to be.

17 *Sleep Now – Alexander Craig*

Sleep now, O sleep now,
O you unquiet heart!
A voice crying ‘Sleep now’
Is heard in my heart.

The voice of the winter
Is heard at the door.
O sleep, for the winter
Is crying ‘Sleep no more’.

My kiss will give peace now
And quiet to your heart –
Sleep on in peace now,
O you unquiet heart!

Text: James Joyce (1882–1941) from ‘Chamber Music’ (1907)

18 *O magnum mysterium – Tomás Luis de Victoria*

O magnum mysterium et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent Dominum natum jacentem in praeseptio.	O great mystery and wonderful sacrament, That animals should see the new-born Lord Lying in a manger!
O beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt portare Dominum Jesum Christum.	O blessed is the Virgin, whose womb Was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!	Alleluia!

[19] *Quem pastores laudavere* – Trad., arr. Susan LaBarr

Quem pastores laudavere,
Quibus angeli dixere:
'Absit vobis iam timere:
Natus est rex gloriae!'

Ad quem magi ambulabant,
Aurum, thus, myrrham portabant;
Immolabant haec sincere
Leoni victoriae;

Exultemus cum Maria
In coelesti hierarchia:
Natum promant voce pia
Dulci cum melodia;

Christo Regi Deo nato,
Per Mariam nobis dato,
Merito resonet vere:
'Laus, honor, et gloria!'

Translation: Hugh Keyte / Andrew Parrott

Shepherds sang their praises o'er him,
Called by angels to adore him:
'Have no fear, but come before:
Born is now your glorious King!'

Easter sages came to view him,
Judah's conquering Lion knew him,
Gold, and myrrh, and incense to him
As their tribute offering.

On this Child, rejoicing, gaze we;
Led by Mary, anthems raise we;
Reverently, with angels, praise we
With the sweetest melody.

Christ our King, from Mary springing,
God made man, salvation bringing,
Thee we worship, ever singing:
'Honour, praise, and glory be!'

[20] *Quid petis, o fili* – Richard Pygott (from Henry VIII's Songbook)

Quid petis, o fili? Mater dulcissima ba ba.
O pater, o fili, mihi plausus oscula da da.

What seekest Thou, O my Son? The sweetest mother ba ba.
O Father, O Son, clapping hands da da.

The mother, full mannerly and meekly as a maid,
Looking on her little son, so laughing in lap laid
So prettily, so pertly, so passingly well apay'd
Full softly and full soberly unto her sweet son she said:

Quid petis...

Musing on her manners so nigh marr'd was my main
Save it pleased me so passingly that passed was my pain;
Yet softly to her sweet son methought I heard her sain:
Now gracious God and good sweet babe, yet once this game again

Quid petis...

21 *Un flambeau, Jeanette, Isabelle* – Trad., arr. Alexander Craig

Un flambeau, Jeanette, Isabelle
Un flambeau ! Courons au berceau !
C'est Jésus, bonnes gens du hameau.
Le Christ est né ; Marie appelle !
Ah ! Ah ! Ah ! Que la Mère est belle,
Ah ! Ah ! Ah ! Que l'Enfant est beau !

C'est un tort, quand l'Enfant sommeille,
C'est un tort de crier si fort.
Taisez-vous, l'un et l'autre, d'abord !
Au moindre bruit, Jésus s'éveille.
Chut ! chut ! chut ! Il dort à merveille,
Chut ! chut ! chut ! Voyez comme il dort !

Doucement, dans l'étable close,
Doucement, venez un moment !
Approchez ! Que Jésus est charmant !
Comme il est blanc ! Comme il est rose !
Do ! Do ! Do ! Que l'Enfant repose !
Do ! Do ! Do ! Qu'il rit en dormant !

Bring a torch, Jeanette, Isabelle!
Bring a torch, to the stable run
Christ is born. Tell the folk of the village
Jesus is born and Mary's calling.
Ah! Ah! beautiful is the Mother!
Ah! Ah! beautiful is her child

It is wrong when the child is sleeping,
It is wrong to talk so loud.
Silence, now as you gather around,
Lest your noise should waken Jesus.
Hush! Hush! see how he slumbers;
Hush! Hush! see how fast he sleeps!

Softly now unto the stable,
Softly for a moment come!
Look and see how charming is Jesus,
Look at him there, His cheeks are rosy!
Hush! Hush! see how the Child is sleeping;
Hush! Hush! see how he smiles in dreams!

22 *Bethlehem Down* – Peter Warlock

'When he is King we will give him the King's gifts,
Myrrh for its sweetness, and gold for a crown,
Beautiful robes', said the young girl to Joseph,
Fair with her firstborn on Bethlehem Down.

Bethlehem Down is full of the starlight –
Winds for the spices, and stars for the gold,
Mary for sleep, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

When he is King they will clothe him in grave-sheets,
Myrrh for embalming, and wood for a crown,
He that lies now in the white arms of Mary,
Sleeping so lightly on Bethlehem Down.

Here he has peace and short while for dreaming,
Close-huddled oxen to keep him from cold,
Mary for love, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

Text: Bruce Blunt (1899–1957)

[23] *Magi veniunt ab oriente* – Jacob Clemens ‘non Papa’

Magi veniunt ab Oriente Jerosolimam,
quaerentes et dicentes:
‘Ubi est qui natus est, rex Iudaeorum,
cujus stellam vidimus?’
Et venimus cum muneribus adorare Dominum.’
Magi videntes stellam dixerunt ad invicem:
Hoc signum magni regis est eamus et
inquiramus eum
et offeramus ei munera aurum thus et mirrhum.’
Alleluia.

Wise men came from the Orient to Jerusalem
inquiring and saying,
‘Where is he that is born King of the Jews,
whose star we have seen?’
We have come with gifts to offer the Lord.’
The magi, having seen the star, said, each in turn:
‘This is the sign of a great king!’
Let us go and look for him
And offer him gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh.’
Alleluia

[24] *O Little Town of Bethlehem* – Lewis Henry Redner, arr. Alexander Craig

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie,
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light,
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King and peace to men on earth.

Where children pure and happy pray to the blessed Child,
Where misery cries out to Thee, son of the mother mild.
Where charity stands watching and faith holds wide the door,
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks and Christmas comes once more.

Text: Phillips Brooks (1835–1893)

PREVIOUSLY RELEASED:



TIMES GO BY TURNS

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Andrew Smith: Kyrie: Cunctipotens Genitor Deus

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Michael McGlynn (track 9): Warner Chappell Music

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Tel.: 08 (Int.+46 8) 54 41 02 30
info@bis.se www.bis.se

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